of bovine population. It has also funded two Biotechnology Research Projects to Indian Grassland and Fodder Research Institute, Jhansi. They are (a) Development of better quality and disease resistant lines (Root rot & Stem rot) in Berseem through inter-specific hybridization using embryo rescue technique and (b) Use of molecular markers in improvement of stylo with special reference to quality and drought.

(d) and (e) An integrated intensive farming approach calls for integrating of agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors together. Therefore, setting up of a Veterinary Research Council is not contemplated.

Employment in agriculture sector

1963. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employment generation opportunities in the agricultural sector in the country have dwindled;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has formulated any scheme for creating additional employment opportunities in the agricultural sector; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) As per Population Census 1991, the total number of cultivators and agricultural workers in the country engaged in agriculture was 210.68 million. The same has increased to 234.10 million in 2001 Census (latest). As per two most recent quinquennial rounds of National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) on Employment and Unemployment, employment on Usual Status basis in agriculture sector was estimated at 239.73 million persons in 1999-2000 (55th round) which has gone up to 258.59 million persons in 2004-05 (61st round). As such dependence on agriculture has increased.

(c) and (d) There is no scheme as such to create additional employment in agriculture. However, several development programmes such as Macro Management of Agriculture covering Integrated Cereals Development Programme (ICDP) for Rice, Wheat and Coarse Cereals, Gramin Bhandaran Yojana, Development of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Micro Irrigation, Rural Credit, Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) and National Horticulture Mission (NHM) are being implemented.

Recently, Government has launched two schemes *viz.* (i) National Food Security Mission (NFSM) to increase production of Rice, Wheat and Pulses and (ii) Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) to incentives the States/UTs to invest more in the agriculture sector. These Schemes are envisaged to increase employment opportunities. These programmes, apart from creating on-farm and non-farm employment are expected to improve the income realization also by the farmers.

Horticulture Mission in Sikkim

1964. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated the National Horticulture Mission in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the details of work done under the said scheme in the different States particularly in the Sikkim during 2006-07 and 2007-08, State-wise; and